



Master Meat Crafter Program Graduates 21

Release Date: January 17, 2014

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MADISON – Twenty-one people were awarded the distinction of a Master Meat Crafter on Friday. This second graduating class of the Master Meat Crafter Program completed the two and a half year program by giving individual presentations and participating in a graduation ceremony in Madison.

“Congratulations to all the Master Meat Crafters for their commitment to developing and perfecting their skills,” said Department of Agriculture, Trade and Consumer Protection (DATCP) Secretary Ben Brancel. “The breadth of projects completed by these graduates will benefit not only their individual meat businesses but the entire specialty meats industry.”

The Master Meat Crafter Program allows participants to build on their experiences in meat science and processing through a comprehensive curriculum of a plant research project, workshops and assignments. Topics included food safety, microbiology and meat curing. Each Master Meat Crafter also completed a mentorship component, sharing what they gained with an employee or another individual.

“Master Meat Crafter graduates set the Wisconsin meats industry apart as a leader in the nation,” added Brancel. “We welcome anyone from other states to come learn from our Master Meat Crafter Program.”

This one-of-a-kind program allows graduates to earn the accreditation of a Master Meat Crafter. A seal of distinction can now be used by the program graduates on their product labels as a symbol of their unique skills and extensive knowledge.

Graduates of the Master Meat Crafter Program and a brief description of their projects include:

- **Jamie Cline, Rhinelander – T.A. Solberg Company:** Improving bacon yield by modifying the manufacturing process.
- **Jennifer Dierkes, Clear Lake (Minnesota) – McDonald’s Meats, Inc.:** Developing shelf stable alpaca sticks.
- **Mike Flanigan, Clayton – Northwoods Locker LLC:** Developing shelf stable pepperoni product.
- **John Franseen, Marshfield – Hewitt Meat Processing Inc.:** Exploring the differences between natural and collagen casings in fresh breakfast sausage.
- **Mark Hanni, Iron Ridge – PS Seasonings and Spices:** Investigating pellet versus sawdust smoking.
- **Thomas Heise, Marathon – Custom Meats of Marathon, Inc.:** Investigating the effect of greater control of thermal processing on finished products.



Twenty-one people graduated from the Master Meat Crafter Program on Friday evening in Madison.

- **Nathan Jorgensen, Antigo – Peroutka’s Meat Processing:** Adding phosphates to whole muscle hams.
- **Gidget Joyal, Sheboygan Falls – Johnsonville Sausage LLC:** Comparing sodium tripolyphosphate on food service stadium style bratwurst.
- **Ralph Krawczyk, St. Francis – Wixon, Inc.:** Looking at how meat block fat composition affects spice flavor in fresh sausage.
- **Kurtis Lam, Oconomowoc – Fox Bros. Piggly Wiggly:** Creating a shelf stable snack stick.
- **David Mauer, Mauston – Wisconsin River Meats:** Creating a boneless deli ham.
- **Louis Muench, Cumberland – Louie’s Finer Meats, Inc.:** Investigating shelf life of fresh sausage for retail sale.
- **William Muench, Cumberland – Louie’s Finer Meats, Inc.:** Breaking into the snack stick market.
- **Chad Nolechek, Thorp – Nolechek’s Meats:** Looking at the effects of cheese on the fermentation of shelf stable snack sticks.
- **Andrew Pearson, West Ashland – Sixth Street Market:** Developing a dried shelf stable summer sausage.
- **Bradley Pearson, Lodi – Lodi Sausage Co.:** Developing new flavors of bacon.
- **Terrance Prem, Spring Green – Prem Meats:** Determining profit margin on fully cooked meats.
- **Anthony Reams, Hudson - RJ’s Meats and Groceries:** Testing consumer perception and acceptability of heritage pork.
- **Joel Reck, Stevens Point – Ski’s Meat Market:** Creating Ski’s Meat Market new store guide book.
- **Philip Schmidt, Greenville – The Meat Block LLC:** Developing a shelf stable summer sausage and snack stick.
- **Anton Washa, Foley (Minnesota) – Foley Locker:** Producing a full-truck of snack sticks.

The Master Meat Crafter Program has been developed in conjunction with the Specialty Meat Development Center and is supported by DATCP, University of Wisconsin Meat Science Extension, University of Wisconsin and the Wisconsin Association of Meat Processors.

In 2012, 17 graduates completed the first Master Meat Crafter Program. To locate specialty meat products from all 38 Master Meat Crafters or other specialty meats businesses, visit <http://datcp.wisconsin.gov/SpecialtyMeats/>.

Applications are now being accepted for next Master Meat Crafter Program. Space is limited. Learn more at <http://fyi.uwex.edu/meats/>. For complete details, contact DATCP’s Livestock and Meat Specialist, at 608-224-5082 or Jeffrey.Swenson@wisconsin.gov.

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